(a) India's trade deficit in terms of US dollars as on September 30, 1991;

(b) the corresponding figures for the previous three years; and

(c) the reasons for increase in deficit?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) and (b). The details of trade deficit, in dollar terms, during the period April-September 1991 and corresponding period of 1990-1989 and 1988 are given below:

(Value: US$ Million)

Period	*Trade Deficit*
April-Sept.91	1021
April-Sept.90	2426
April-Sept.89	1916
April-Sept.88	3013

(c) As may be seen, the trade deficit at US$ 1021 million during April-September 1991 was lowest as compared to the corresponding period of previous three years.

Reward to Informants of Contraband Gold and Silver

1398. SHRI HARI KISHORE SINGH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the policy of the Government with regard to rewarding the informants of contraband gold and silver;

(b) whether the public is also given the same benefits as are given to the Customs officials; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR): (a) to (c). Members of the general public giving information leading to the seizure of contraband gold and silver are eligible for monetary reward upto a maximum of Rs. 500 per 10 grams of gold and Rs. 1000 per kg. of silver. However, such monetary rewards are purely ex-gratia payments and cannot be claimed as a matter of right. The competent authority deciding upon grant of amount as rewards has to keep in mind various factors such as the specificity and accuracy of the information, the risk and trouble undertaken, the extent and nature of help rendered by the informer, whether informations gives clues to persons involved in smuggling or their associates, etc.

Similarly, Government servants including Customs officials are also eligible for monetary rewards upto only the same limits. Here too, the amounts granted are ex-gratia payments and cannot be claimed as a matter of right. The authority competent to grant amounts as reward has to keep various factors in mind such as the risk involved to the Government servants in working out the case, the difficulty in securing the information, the extent to which the vigilance of the staff led to the seizure, special initiative, efforts and ingenuity displayed, etc. and whether, besides the seizure of contraband goods, the owners/organisers/financiers/racketeers as well as carriers have been apprehended or not.

Linking of National Highways Nos. 47 and 49 in Kerala

1399. SHRI P.C. THOMAS: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Kerala

has submitted any proposal for allocation of funds for construction of a highway from Alleppey to Muvattupuzha in Kerala to link National Highway No. 49 with National Highway No. 47;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the Union Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) to (c). Presumably the Hon'ble Member is referring to the scheme relating to development of road link from Alleppy Port to Cohin-Madurai Road (National Highway) at Muvatupuzha touching Sherthallai-Thannermukkom-Vaikom-Kaduthuruthy. This scheme was sponsored by the State Government of Kerala under their Central Road Fund Programme for 8th Plan period at an estimated cost of Rs. 797.00 lakhs. However, since actual augmentation of the Central Road Fund against which the proposals were invited has not yet taken place, it has not been possible to process the scheme for approval.

[*Translation*]

Financial Assistance by NABARD for Rural Electrification in Gujarat

1400. SHRI KASHIRAM RANA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the amount allocated by National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development for rural electrification in Gujarat during the Seventh Plan period, district-wise;

(b) the amount spent so far; and

(c) the details of the proposals for rural electrification in Gujarat during the Eighth Plan which have been under consideration of the NABARD, district-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR): (a) and (b). The Special Project Agriculture (SPA) is a programme of Rural Electrification Corporation (REC) to provide finance to State Electricity Board (SEBs) to draw transmission lines and other infrastructure support for pumpsets energisation in rural areas. The Programme is financed by REC, Commercial Banks and National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development. (NABARD) by providing financial support to SEBs in the State. District-wise allocation is done by the SEBs. The amount allocated by NABARD under the Programme during the 7th Plan from 1987-88 to 1989-90 and the achievements made in Gujarat is as under:

(Rs. in lakhs)

Year	*Allocation*	*Achievement*
1985-86	*	704
1986-87	*	1143
1987-88	500	918
1988-89	494	592
1989-90	578	381

*(No separate allocation for REC/SPA programme was made as the same was clubbed with allocation made under Minor Irrigation).

(c). NABARD have reported that they have not worked out allocations for individual States for the VIII Plan period.